

Bollywood Boycott Propaganda: A Study on Digital Media**Riya Jain & Himanshi Gautam****Abstract:**

Digital Media platforms are widespread entertainment sources among youth. It has a prominent influence on the movie's success or failure. After almost two years of the outset of theatres to full capacity, 2022 was predicted to be a profitable year for Bollywood. But things haven't been great as wished. Films like Lal Singh Chadda and Brahmastra Part 1 which took over a decade to produce were boycotted on social media. This study explores the boycott strategy on social media platforms, In this case, Twitter controls the Bollywood box office collection. This study uses primary data to explore these factors affecting box office collection. It Undercovers the factors affecting why Bollywood nowadays is losing its charm among youth. First, why are people shifting towards an OTT Platform like Netflix and boycotting Bollywood? Second, viewers prefer to watch Bollywood Star kids debut movies or self made actors movies. Third, post covid syndrome made viewers watch lessons in cinema halls. Finally, social media influences viewership among young generations.

Keywords: Bollywood, Boycott, Propaganda, Digital Media, OTT, Social Media.

Introduction

India, with a population of 1.38 billion and still counting, has a mixed cinematic culture. The film industry is a key and perhaps the most dynamic Industry of the Indian economy. The number of films produced annually in India is higher than in Hollywood. Hollywood produces around 550 movies a year while Bollywood on other hand produces more than 1000 films per year. A simple search of Bollywood online will come up with hundreds of results that reveal how this popular Indian cinema has made its way into the global mainstream Media. Today, Bollywood has grown its market beyond its traditional territories in South Asia, and getting hands-on international audiences with the Bollywood film industry is steadily coming out of the bottomless freeze after collapsing during the pandemic. Movies in the Hindi language, including Bollywood, South Indian dubs, and Hollywood movies, contributed Rs 1,716 crore to the domestic box office in the first half of the 2022 calendar year.

The amount is just 20 percent lower than the Rs 2,138 crore collected in the first half of 2019 and before the pandemic struck India. The first halves of 2020 and 2021 are not equivalent, as theatres closed then for Covid-19 restrictions. As many as 33 Hindi-language films were

released between January and June 2022, compared to 31 in 2019. Eight films did business of more than Rs 100 crore in 2019, compared to five films in the first half of this year. The share of Hindi language films between January to April this year was 38 percent which was similar to the 39 percent share in 2019. However, 60 percent of this share has been contributed by the Hindi versions of *RRR* and *KGF Chapter 2*. If these two films had not been considered at the Hindi box office, their share would have been much lower. Apart from the Alia Bhatt-starred *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, which earned over Rs 100 crore, and the sleeper hit *The Kashmir Files*, which crossed Rs 200 crore in revenue, Bollywood has not fared well at the box office. However, the Bollywood venture earned Rs 3 crore on day one. *Jersey*, featuring Shahid Kapoor, raked in Rs 19 crore over three weeks, Ajay Devgn's *Runway 34* collected around Rs 29 crore, and *Heropanti 2*, starring Tiger Shroff, managed around Rs 24 crore.

Streaming platforms have hit the Bollywood box office business. The pandemic led to the growth of over-the-top (OTT) platforms, which offered a lot of quality content. This led to audiences being more selective. The pandemic is reducing but OTTs are still giving quality content. The pandemic has led to the rise of direct-to-digital releases. Over the last two years, many film studios and directors have directly released their films on OTT platforms due to the COVID-induced closure of theatres for many months. In the first half of 2021, around 26 Hindi films that were originally conceived for theatrical release were streamed directly on OTT platforms. OTT viewing has impacted Bollywood content the most at the box office.

Post the pandemic, the metro multiplex audience is now clearly segregating films into two buckets: to be watched on the big screen and to be watched on any other screen. Since most Hindi films released to date apart from a *Suryavanshi* or *Gangubai Kathiawadi* fall under the second bucket, Hindi films have not set the box office on fire. Hindi cinema has avoided making films that would appeal to a wide range of audiences. And Boycotts seem to be the new way of popularising a movie to the audience. After boycotting hashtags for Bollywood films *Laal Singh Chaddha* and *Raksha Bandhan* were trending, there is one more in line. *#BoycottAliaBhatt* was seen creating gossip on Twitter ahead of 'Darlings' starring Alia Bhatt. *#BoycottAliaBhatt* concerns the violence and harassment scenes shown in the film *Darlings*. Movie buffs and social media users might be aware that there was a similar outrage during the release and screening of *The Kashmir Files*, *Raazi*, and other movies. Several times film specific hashtags were shared along with *#BoycottBollywoodForever*.

This study aims to find out the relation between trending hashtags and their impact on any movie's success or failure and how social media negative campaigns impact any movie's box office collection.

OBJECTIVES

- To analyse propaganda behind the failures of Bollywood movies by using secondary Data.
- To study the impact of digital media on Bollywood box office collection.
- To find out the reason why youth is losing their interest in Bollywood and shifting towards OTT.

Literature Review

This study focuses on how social media networking sites draw public attention directing to the series of replies, shares, hashtags, and mentions leading to the evolution of communities in the network. According to Sandeep Ranjan, and Sumesh Sood (2017) the success or failure of a Bollywood movie is essentially dependent on viewers' recommendations which they share and gather from social media.

This study concentrates on how Twitter tweets impact box office collection. Whereas Anirban Dutta, Amulyashree Sridhar, and Biplab Bhattacharjee's (2017) study exhibit that it is theoretically possible to draw a causal connection between the polarity of social media material and the amount of box office gain.

This result suggests that there is a noticeable influence of the tweets, comments, and likes existing in the social media on the general public consciousness. The study also suggests that today's moviegoers make decisions about going to the theatre that is impacted by social media. The study also suggests that the contradiction of comments leaves a lasting influence on the audience members who are interested in attending the movie. The Indian audience is diverse in terms of nature, beliefs, and decision-making is one of the main contributing reasons. However, as India's smartphone and internet usage rise, a moment may come when the discussion produced on social media before a movie release would undoubtedly have a significant impact on the audience.

In light of all these factors, the researchers think that large-scale social media data mining would unquestionably be required in the Indian context in the future. A variety of useful information can be produced from the analysis of this data and used to develop strategies for targeted marketing. Nitesh Tripathi, Swati Chandak, and Mr. Sayak Pal (2022) aim to understand the concept of Internet Justice. To evaluate the Internet Justice that resulted from fans, regular people, and other stakeholders, the researcher chose the death of aspiring

Bollywood star Sushant Singh Rajput. The desire for the audience to identify the true cause of his death. While some said that his girlfriend encouraged him to kill himself, others claimed that his fiancée and servants strangled him to death.

The researcher looked at tweets with the hashtag #JusticeforSushantSinghRajput, which was popular because people were pleading with the government and police to act, investigate Sushant's killing, and give his family justice. This was the initial motivation behind the creation of this hashtag. Overall, the majority of tweets mostly concentrated on making assumptions about Sushant's death, blaming someone for his death, or demanding justice for the soul of the deceased. Several significant outcomes came out of this movement in terms of the hashtag's effects. The films starring star kids like Alia Bhatt, Varun Dhawan, Sara Ali Khan, Sanjay Dutt, and Aditya Roy Kapoor caught the attention of the Sushant fan. Because of this, their 2022 YouTube movie trailers received a tonne of negative feedback and were boycotted by many. Additionally, it led to the failure of their movies Sadak 2 and Coolie No. 1.

In addition to these effects, there were some positive ones as well, like the fact that the CBI has now officially begun looking into Sushant's death. However, this cannot be totally credited to Internet Justice as broadcast networks also covered this topic day and night for a few months. There is little doubt that Internet Justice is here to stay, and this research is one such humble endeavour to understand its effects in both the digital and real worlds.

Hypothesis

The main objective of this study is to identify a possible relationship between Social Media Boycott Campaign and Box office collection

H1 - There is Positive linear relationship between Bollywood Boycott Propadaga on Box Office Collection

H2 - There is Negative linear relationship between Bollywood Boycott Propadaga on Box Office Collection

H3 - There is NO linear relationship between Bollywood Boycott Propadaga on Box Office Collection.

For testing the above Hypothesis, the research Design was formulated with the following:-

- Defining the population for the study and collecting the requisite sample from pre Covid to Post Covid (i.e. 2019 - 2022).

- Collecting and analysing the primary data for each sampling unit (Bollywood Movie) from Twitter (Social Media Networking Platform).
- Establishing relationship between the Social Media Bollywood Boycott Propadaga and Bollywood Box Office Collection for the sample.
- Validating the established linear relationship using statistical data and measures
- Deriving actionable insights from the findings that would come in aid for social media researchers and promotional management team of a movie.

Summary

Sample size is between the ages of 13 to 58. Here, in the collected data 26% of the sample is 20 years old whereas 13% of the sample is 19 & 21 years old. There were 51% females and 49% males in this study. 69% of the samples are bachelors whereas 13% are master's graduates. 62% of data is collected from students whereas other are from professional occupations.

48% of the sample watches a Bollywood movie sometimes. But a large portion of 20% of the sample watches it once a week. As per count an equal percentage of male and females watches it sometimes. There is not a very large difference between the genders. According to the age variable people of age 29 watch Bollywood movies every day or every fortnight.

A large percentage of 42% of the sample went to the cinema hall last month. A great percentage of 31% of the sample haven't gone to a cinema hall to watch a Bollywood movie for 6 months. Youth of age between the ages of 19 to 25 haven't gone to a cinema hall to watch a Bollywood movie for 6 months or went cinema hall last Year. Males are more likely to watch Bollywood movies in cinemas in comparison to females. A large number of 22% of samples have watched Drishyam 2 released on Nov 18, 2022 on the big screen with an IMDb rating of 8.4 stars Director by Abhishek Pathak starring Ajay Devgn and Tabu. The box office of Drishyam 2 is around Gross worldwide \$2,949,823.

More than half a percentage of the sample watches movies on OTT rather than going to cinema halls. Whereas 12% wait for to it release on Television. Around 54 percent of the sample stream Netflix. Where 46 stream Amazon Prime. 38 stream Hotstar, 9 stream Voot, 11 streams Sony liv, and lastly 8% of the sample stream other OTT platforms for entertainment.

54% of the sample preferred watching both bollywood movie and OTT. Where 33% prefer the OTT platform over A Bollywood Movie. Where more than 50% of the sample agrees that the footfall in the cinema hall is decreasing day by day. 45% of the sample watches a movie depending on the cast starring. Whereas 20% don't care about what the cast is starring in.

Female respondents are more likely to watch movies depending on the cast starring in them. More than 60% of the samples prefer watching movies of self-made actors. Only 12% are more likely to watch movies of star kids. After Covid-19, samples have started watching Bollywood less and started watching web series on OTT platforms more. More females started watching web series in comparison to males.

64%, which is more than half of the samples, prefer to watch an OTT original Series rather spending time watching a newly released Bollywood film. Age groups from 13 to 58 mostly consider watching an OTT series. The total time spent on social media by the samples is around 1 to 4 hours by the samples. Females are likely to use social media less in comparison to males. A sample of 19 to 21 is more likely to spend more than 6 hours on social media. 54% of samples agree that somehow Social Media has influenced them to watch a Bollywood movie. Samples of all ages most likely agree that YES Social Media has influenced them to watch a Bollywood movie. Both Gender equally, agrees that YES Social Media has influenced them to watch a Bollywood movie. 48% of the samples are agreeing that somehow social media is influencing Indian cinemas and 22% STRONGLY AGREE to the same. Both Gender equally, agrees that somehow social media is influencing Indian cinema. Somehow Females are likely to stay neutral whereas males also disagree more. Only 35% of samples watch a Bollywood movie under peer pressure and only 3% watch it always and 8% often under peer pressure. Males are more likely to watch a Bollywood movie under peer pressure. Younger generation is more likely to watch a Bollywood movie under peer pressure.

69% of the samples are aware of the #boycott trend on social media. Where 34% of samples never support the #boycottbollywood hate campaign on Social Media whereas still, but 11% of samples support the same. Males are more likely to support the #boycottbollywood hate campaign on Social Media whereas females sometimes or rarely support it. 46% of samples sometimes feel like a boycott strategy on social media controlling Bollywood. Whereas 8% think that it NEVER controls Bollywood. Extreme age groups of the samples are likely to think that the boycott strategy on social media not controlling Bollywood at all. Most Males samples think that the boycott strategy on social media is not controlling Bollywood at all in comparison to the females. On the other hand, females often think that the boycott strategy on social media is Controlling Bollywood.

65% of the total samples agree and strongly agree that Bollywood hate campaigns on social media affects the failure or success of a movie. Whereas NO ONE strongly disagrees. All age group samples agree and strongly agree that Bollywood hate campaigns on social media affect

the failure or success of a movie. 21% agrees, 26% disagrees and 41% samples are neutral about the #boycottbollywood trend on social media is propaganda to make movies popular. 36% agree and 19% disagrees and 31% of the samples are neutral around the failure of a movie is determined because of a hate campaign.

Conclusion

Data collected showcases after Covid-19, samples have started watching Bollywood less and started watching web series on OTT platforms more. The age group of 26 to 37 never supported the #boycottbollywood hate campaign on Social Media whereas still, 11% of samples support the same. Males are more likely to support the #boycottbollywood hate campaign on Social Media but females sometimes or rarely support it. Most Samples agree that somehow social media is influencing Indian cinemas. Both, Gender equally, agrees that somehow social media is influencing Indian cinema.

Here, we can conclude that people have post COVID syndrome where they are watching OTT platforms as they find Bollywood losing its charm and movies are not up to the mark. Today's youth is more likely to spend more than 6 hours on social media. Around half of samples sometimes feel like a boycott strategy on social media controlling Bollywood. More than half of the total samples agree and strongly agree that Bollywood hate campaigns on social media affect the failure or success of a movie. Whereas NO ONE strongly disagrees.

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